

# Co-construction of Word Search Activities in Native and Non-native Speaker Interaction

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examines the co-construction of word search activities between native and non-native speakers of English. Word searching occurs when two interlocutors use joint resources to retrieve a word that is alluding one of the interlocutors in conversation. Word searches are highly prevalent in interaction, often becoming a central activity in non-native discourse. The focus of this article is twofold: first, on the sequential organization of the word search activity, and second, on the public structure of word searches. Using video recordings of English tutoring sessions and social gatherings of native and non-native speakers of English, the detailed practice of word searching was analyzed in this study. It examines the interactional process through which a distributed responsibility of participants for sequential coherence, meaning, and events is co-constructed (Jacoby & Ochs, 1995). This article argues that a word search activity is a social action, and interactions between native and non-native speakers of English demonstrate the ways through which participants coordinate this sequential and public action.

## INTRODUCTION

Word searching is a phenomenon that occurs in many types of interactions including those between native, non-native, child, and adult speakers of a language within mono-linguistic and cross-linguistic settings. Word searches have been studied within several different research paradigms such as Discourse Analysis, Conversation Analysis (CA), and Second Language Acquisition (SLA). CA examines word searches as part of repair sequences. The CA notion of repair includes the courses of conduct that address problems of speaking, hearing, or understanding talk (Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977). Such repair is a co-constructed action that occurs through the coordination of turns-at-talk, embodiments, and environments on a moment-by-moment basis among the participants (C. Goodwin, 1979; M. Goodwin, 1990; Heritage, 1984a; Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, 2007). Each participant creates talk that takes the particulars of the interlocutor into consideration (e.g., the recipient's prior knowledge of the intended referent); thus, one of the generic features in the organization of talk-in-interaction is that talk is designed for the recipient—also known as recipient design (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990; Sacks & Schegloff, 1979). Conversation Analysis is a discipline that allows for the examination of

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talk-in-interaction, the primordial site of human sociality, asking “why that now” for each and every utterance by reference to the sequence in progress (Schegloff, 1993; Schegloff, 2007, p. 249). Its origin lies in sociology, as the concept of conversational uses of language is the fundamental locus of social organizations (Heritage, 1984b). The central domain of data analyzed through CA concerns everyday, mundane conversations. However, a growing number of empirical studies apply conversation analytic techniques to institutional data, such as emergency calls (Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987), legal settings (Atkinson & Drew, 1979; Maynard, 1984), and pedagogical settings (Koshik, 2005; Lerner, 1995). As CA focuses on talk-in-interaction in various contexts, it intersects with applied linguistics research concerned with the examination of native and non-native talk, language pedagogy, and intercultural communication. In particular, a growing number of studies in SLA have adopted core CA concepts (including investigations into turn-taking, sequential organization, and repair), and have used CA as a method to research non-native discourse (Brouwer, 2003, 2004; Carroll, 2004, 2005; He, 2004; Hosoda, 2000; Kasper, 2004; Kurhila, 2001, 2006; Markee, 2004; Wagner, 1996; Wong, 2000, 2004). As many researchers in the field of SLA view language as a social phenomenon that is acquired and used interactively, CA tools have been useful in the investigation of language learners’ interactional practices, since they are seen as active participants of a larger discourse within this framework (Firth & Wagner, 1997; Gardner & Wagner, 2004; Kasper, 2004; Wong, 2000). In addition, although CA generally investigates naturally occurring conversations as a social action in both ordinary and institutional settings, an increasing number of studies in SLA have incorporated these techniques with experimental data as well (Heritage, 1997; Richards & Seedhouse, 2005; Schegloff, Koshik, Jacoby, & Olsher, 2002; Wagner, 1996).

Using CA as an analytical tool, this study aims to show that a word search activity between native speakers (NSs) and non-native speakers (NNSs) is a sequentially situated and publicly managed interaction. It describes the practices that participants make use of to monitor word searches and to act upon each other’s actions as they attempt to reach a satisfactory outcome. In addition to analyzing participants’ use of verbal and non-verbal resources, the detailed practices through which interlocutors exhibit their visible action as an interactional resource for each other are investigated. This study expands upon the notion of recipient design (i.e., how interlocutors modify their talk in accordance with other participants), as in foreigner talk and in the use of communication strategies in native and non-native interaction (Ellis, 1985; Hatch, 1978, 1983; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991). The findings demonstrate that word search activities are realized through the mutual monitoring and coordination of public actions (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986; Schegloff, 1992a). First, the sequential organization of word search activities on a moment-by-moment basis will be reviewed. A discussion of the public structure of the activities will follow, focusing on the way participants deploy visible actions.

## **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

Word searches are prevalent in various kinds of interaction, and thus have been examined in a variety of disciplines with distinct perspectives. Studies from different disciplines on word search activities are explicated first, and then the possibility of the convergence among such different research traditions is discussed.

First, from a conversation analytical perspective, a word search sequence is considered one of the primary sequences that demonstrate an adjacency pair through which an action is accomplished as a basic unit of social organization (Sacks, 1992a; 1992b). An adjacency pair is a

sequence of two utterances in which a first pair part requires a relevant second pair part that displays the recipient's understanding of the current turn (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973; Schegloff, 2007). For example, greeting-greeting, question-answer, or offer-acceptance/decline all constitute adjacency pairs. What is at issue is not the grammatical form, but the action initiated by the first pair part and accomplished in the adjacency pair sequence. Sacks (1992a) further demonstrates this point illustrating that when a speaker pauses within the course of a sentence to search for a word, the recipient often attempts to complete the sentence by proffering the word that is looked for. Here is an example provided by Sacks (1992a, p. 321):

Ken: He looked like he was coming in here for uh...  
Al: -kicks.  
Louise: -guidance. heh

What this example shows is how both recipients, Al and Louise, respond to the action of searching for a word that is initiated by the speaker, Ken. As a result, the speaker and the recipients collaborate in producing a grammatically complete sentence. With the illustration of such collaborative production of new sentences, Sacks (1992a, 1992b) challenges the idea that a sentence is a basic unit of social organization. Instead, he proposes that the distribution of adjacency pairs through which actions are implemented keeps participants attentive to the ongoing talk.

Based on the understanding that an adjacency pair is a fundamental unit of social organization, Schegloff et al. (1977) note that a word search activity falls in the domain of repair, and show how repair refers to a broader range of actions than the terms such as a correction or a replacement might suggest. They analyzed repair in naturally occurring conversations and found a preference for self-initiation and self-correction over other-initiation and other-correction. The study showed that self-initiations use various non-lexical speech perturbations such as cut-offs, sound stretches, and *uh*'s, whereas other-initiations use turn-constructive devices including question words and partial repeats of the trouble-source turn in order to project the following repair initiation. Reporting the highly constrained occurrence of other-correction, the researchers suggest that the frequent use of other-correction may be relevant to "not-yet-competent" speakers and suggest other-correction as a vehicle for socialization (p. 381).

Drawing upon the research of Schegloff et al. (1977), Wong (1994), in her study of NS-NNS interaction, investigated the use of *yeah* in same-turn repair and delayed next-turn repair initiation. She found that delayed next-turn repair frequently occurs in NS-NNS interaction, and *yeah* is sequentially positioned at the moment of solution in repair. Examining the details of talk, she demonstrated how NNSs' (in)competence in the target language becomes interactionally relevant in NS-NNS communication. Hosoda (2000) also employed the CA method to examine naturally occurring NS-NNS conversations in Japanese and confirmed the preference for self-initiation in repair. Her study aimed to provide a preliminary examination of the nature of other-repair in NS-NNS interaction. She looked closely at word search sequences, among other-repair sequences, and found that non-verbal behavior as well as verbal behavior effectively initiates other-repair. Embodied cues such as gaze and body orientation combined with verbal indications of sound stretches, fillers, and question markers are used to invite help from NSs in finding a word. Hosoda further explicated that NSs and NNSs tend to use certain different verbal resources to self-initiate other-repair. For example, NSs exclusively used the Japanese demonstrative pronoun *are* (translated as *that*) as one way of holding a place for a noun or noun phrase that is searched for.

She claims that paying close attention to participants' verbal and non-verbal behaviors is necessary as NNSs often request conversational help from NSs using both resources.

The importance of studying the use of non-verbal resources is further demonstrated by Goodwin and Goodwin (1986). They analyzed a word search activity focusing on its organization for non-verbal phenomena and co-participation frameworks. They examined word search sequences in detail and found that gestures, including gaze shifts and a distinctive thinking face, occurred at particular points in talk, after the self-interruption of a turn constructional unit. The placement of such visual phenomena was demonstrated to be consequential for the recipient to recognize the ongoing activity and act upon it. Gazing toward a recipient within a word search often establishes the relevance of the recipient's escalated involvement in the activity. The investigators argued that gesture within a particular word search activity results in visible changes in the co-participation status of participants.

Based on a different research paradigm, studies relying on SLA theories consider a word search as a type of interactional practice through which language learners require assistance from their peers, teachers, and NSs. A large body of research on native and non-native interaction stems from the study of communication strategies and negotiation of meaning (Færch & Kasper, 1983; Gass & Selinker, 1994; Larsen-Freeman, 1980). Færch and Kasper (1983) examined language learners' interlanguage and use of communication strategies. Although their study did not examine word search activities specifically, their study showed that, in general, learners utilized communication strategies when faced with problems in planning and producing utterances. Learners attempted to solve such problems by using compensatory communication strategies such as interlingual transfer, code switching, paraphrasing, and restructuring. As a continuation of Færch and Kasper, Kasper and Kellerman (1997) investigated learners' lexical problem-solving strategies. The researchers provided examples of relevant communicative strategies for situations in which speakers do not have lexical resources, cannot recall the resources, or cannot use them due to contextual constraints. The study suggested that word searches indicate learners' lexical deficiencies that are compensated for by the deployment of communication strategies.

From a slightly different perspective, Gass and Selinker (1994) reviewed many studies that looked at non-native discourse in light of negotiation of meaning (pp. 259-309). They reported that findings from various studies, including Gass and Varonis (1985) and Long (1983), showed how participants negotiated the meaning of utterances to maintain equal footing of both parties. Participants often questioned particular utterances or requested conversational help from one another when faced with difficulties in comprehending their interlocutor's lexical choice. Gass and Selinker noted that negotiation of meaning through confirmation checks, comprehension checks, and clarification requests occurred more frequently in conversations involving NNSs compared to the conversations solely among NSs. In relation to the negotiation of meaning process, Schwartz (1980) examined word searches within other-repair sequences. She stated that word searches are constructed in ways in which speakers confer with hearers to negotiate connecting a word with its meaning. Speakers use a variety of verbal strategies (such as providing synonyms, definitions, and examples) and non-verbal strategies (including changing eye gaze, posture, and hand rotation). She described cases where not only speakers but also hearers began word searches of their own as a way to demonstrate how the search was built on an interactive process (pp. 144-145).

Overall, many studies discuss word searches as part of repair activities in native discourse but only a few studies have focused on word searches in native and non-native interaction (Brouwer, 2003; Hosoda, 2000; Kurhila, 2006; Wong, 1994). Word searches in non-native discourse require a thorough examination as they carry significant interactional import. Since the

scope of words being searched in native and non-native interaction mainly includes content words, failures in word searches are likely to engender major communicative problems such as communication delays and breakdowns (Brouwer, 2003; Kurhila, 2006). With these different perspectives in mind, the present study examines how NSs and NNSs of English construct their action at different junctures of word search activities using both verbal and non-verbal resources. That is, the study examines the interactional work through which a distributed responsibility of participants for sequential coherence, meaning, and events is co-constructed (Jacoby & Ochs, 1995). A word search as a repair activity to solve an interactional problem is examined. In addition, the internal organization of a word search to build *intersubjectivity* among interlocutors is discussed in detail. Intersubjectivity is achieved by “a set of practices by which actions and stances could be composed in a fashion which displayed grounding in, and orientation to, ‘knowledge held in common’” (Schegloff, 1992b, p. 1298). Searching for a word is therefore a practice through which participants build shared understandings and assumptions within and through interaction.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. How do participants sequentially organize word searches? In other words, how do they request participation, provide candidate answers, and display acceptance, rejection, or modifications of their interlocutors’ action?
2. How do participants treat a word search activity as part of the larger sequence of interaction? That is, how do they orient to the word search and re-engage with the original talk?
3. What are the resources used by speakers in order to make themselves understood and to ask the help of recipients in searching for a word? Specifically, how do the speakers make verbal, non-verbal, and the combination of both kinds of resources public?

## METHOD AND DATA COLLECTION

The participants in this study were graduate and undergraduate students attending a major research university in the U.S., and ranged in age from their twenties to forties. The data analyzed for this study are based on a total of four hours and thirty minutes of video-recorded conversations between NSs and NNSs of English. Data from both formal and informal settings was collected, including English tutoring sessions, dinner table conversations, and social gatherings among friends and peers. The data for the study consist of the following:

1. Tutoring Session: Two-hour conversation between a tutor and a tutee  
Jane: Tutor, NS of English  
Lee: Tutee, NNS of English
2. Roommate Dinner: Thirty-minute conversation between two roommates  
John: NS of English  
Wong: NNS of English
3. New Year’s Dinner: Two-hour conversation among three friends  
Becky, Diane: NSs of English  
Eun: NNS of English

For the purpose of collecting naturally occurring conversations for data, no attempt was made to standardize the conversations. Topics were neither suggested nor assigned. The recorded conversations were transcribed following CA conventions (Jefferson, 2004).<sup>2</sup> All names in transcripts are pseudonyms in order to protect the anonymity of the subjects.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### Sequential Organization

Word searches are embedded in a larger sequence of interaction. They are treated as distinctive activity systems that are framed by visible phenomena (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986). Word searches are frequently marked with non-lexical speech perturbations, *uh::*, cut-offs, and sound stretches, as well as gestural movements, gaze shifts, eyebrow flashes, and a thinking face (Carroll, 2004; Schegloff, 1979). In addition, the closure of the activities is often indicated by the acceptance of the sought-for word by NNSs. According to Hosoda (2000), NNSs often repeat the word, produce a token such as *right*, and give head nods to display their acceptance of the repair. The acceptance may also be followed by a joint celebration among participants. The more extensively word search sequences are expanded, the more clearly the endings become marked with much enthusiasm and appreciation (C. Goodwin, 1995). The following excerpt shows such different stages of a word search.

#### EXCERPT 1

<p>1 John: And do they umm::                  2 do they put it in an album too? for you?                  3 Wong: Yeah. Put in an album                  4 <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">anduh:: some</span> how to say this.                  5 (0.8)                  6 Very big.</p>		<p>INITIATION                  REQUEST FOR HELP                  +DISPLAY OF RESOURCE</p>
<p>7 John: Oh:: like <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">a big poster?</span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">[Big print?</span>                  8 Wong: [Yeah •like that.                  9 Yeah big print big poster and:: (1.2)                  10 Anyways (0.5) it's expensive                  11 John: Yeah.</p>	<p>CANDIDATE ANSWER                  ACCEPTANCE</p>	

Including the above excerpt, the data examined reveal a consistent pattern of different stages in word search activities. Each action of the search can only be understood in its sequential position and local context. The basic organization of word searches can be summarized as below.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix for Transcription Conventions.

**FIGURE 1**  
**The Organization of Word Searches**

Original Sequence	Initiation of a Word Search  Request for Help + Display of Resource  Proposal of a Candidate Answer  Acceptance/Rejection of the Answer  (Celebratory) Ending of the Word Search	Resumption of the Original Sequence
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The examined data suggest that NNSs were generally able to discern the right word from many possible candidate answers. Based on their knowledge of the sought-for word, they determined the appropriateness of the proposed word and either accepted or rejected it. This confirms that one's lexical knowledge may concern different degrees and dimensions of knowledge as a continuum rather than existing as an all-or-nothing entity (Laufer, 1998). In other words, receptive (passive) knowledge of a word enables the user to comprehend the word when heard or seen, but does not guarantee that he or she will correctly produce the word when speaking or writing. A definite relationship between receptive and productive (active) knowledge remains to be verified; however, most studies acknowledge that one's receptive vocabulary is larger than productive vocabulary and that one's lexical knowledge progresses from receptive to productive knowledge (Bialystok & Sharwood-Smith, 1985; Carter, 1987; Færch, Haastrup, & Phillipson, 1984; Laufer & Paribakht, 1998). The organization of word searches demonstrates how NNSs' search for a word often involves their receptive lexical knowledge to co-construct the search process as active participants in interaction. They may not be able to produce a certain word, but may be able recognize it as the right word when proposed by NSs. That is, their receptive lexical knowledge enables them to accept or reject the candidate answer offered by their interlocutors.

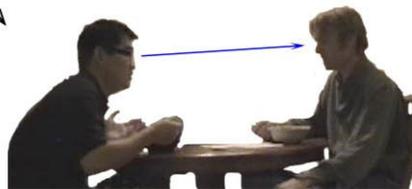
In Excerpt 2, Wong, who recently got married in China, is telling John about his experience with wedding pictures.

EXCERPT 2

1 Wong: Anduh:: they show you every picture,  
 2 This one's good,  
 3 okay this one's also good.  
 4 John: Yeah(hhh).  
 5 Wong: Take them [bo:th.  
 ((smile voice))  
 6 John: [.hhh Yeah yeah.  
 7 Wong: .hhh And lastly you pay like (0.5) um::  
 ((clears throat)) ((shifts gaze))  
 8 John: Twice as much [as you expected?  
 9 Wong: [Twice as much yeah.  
 10 John: Ye::ah.  
 11 It was the same with the:: (.)  
 12 my fiancé's brother.  
 13 Wong: Mm-hmm?=  
 14 John: =who got married.  
 15 And the >they they did the same thing  
 16 with the pictures?



INITIATION  
 + REQUEST FOR HELP  
 CANDIDATE ANSWER  
 ACCEPTANCE



In line 7, Wong enters into a word search with the hesitation marker *like*, which is followed by the 0.5-second pause, and the major delay projection *um* in his speech (Clark & Fox-Tree, 2002). As he projects the delay, Wong's gaze shifts toward John, which plays a central role in soliciting John's recognition. Immediately after Wong begins to move his head up to gaze at John, John also slightly moves his head toward Wong and brings his gaze to him. Such gaze shift within a word search often establishes the relevance of the recipient's escalated involvement in the activity (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986). Following the gaze shift, the candidate answer with rising intonation is provided by John in line 8, *Twice as much as you expected?* In line 9, Wong accepts John's candidate answer as he repeats the same phrase with the acceptance token *yeah* (Hosoda, 2000). With Wong's acceptance, the search comes to an end. As a result of the participants' collaborative effort to achieve shared understanding, not only the searching activity but also the sentence itself are co-constructed. Each turn in lines 7 and 8 does not constitute a grammatically complete sentence by itself; however, the candidate answer is built as grammatically parasitic on the initiation of the search and completes the sentence, *you pay like (0.5) um:: twice as much as you expected?* (Lerner, 2004; Sacks, 1992a). It should also be noted that the sentence ends with rising intonation and is followed by Wong's repetition. The rising intonation suggests that the answer is proposed as a candidate gloss that awaits acceptance from the search initiator. Following the completion of the joint search, John aligns with Wong's story in line 10 and provides him with a similar story as they continue with the original sequence about wedding pictures.

The sequential organization of the word search activity shows that each action is based on the mutual monitoring of the interlocutors. Both participants pay close attention to each other's actions and coordinate their own action in reference to each other. In Excerpt 2, John joins the search at the exact moment when he is invited to. His candidate answer is built upon Wong's attempt for collocation. Simultaneously, Wong exercises his authority of accepting the provided word as soon as he recognizes John's candidate answer. As Wong closes down the search with acceptance, John resumes the ongoing talk as a sequentially relevant next action.

This organization also reveals the presupposed division of labor and the distributed knowledge between the participants (C. Goodwin, 1987, 1995). C. Goodwin (1987) illustrates the

practices through which a complementary relationship between a speaker and a recipient is maintained. A speaker designs his or her action either as telling or requesting depending on the recipient's state of knowledge. Word searches in native and non-native interaction also presuppose a complementary relationship between a speaker and a recipient. However, the knowledge that is distributed among the participants is different from native interaction. Recipients' states of knowledge are not based on shared information, experiences, or intimate relationships among the participants. Instead, a close examination of word search sequences demonstrates the NNS' orientation to the fact that, while the NNS may have expertise and authority in the content of what they are trying to produce, the NSs has expertise in language, as the following table illustrates.

**TABLE 1**  
**Complementary Distributed Knowledge in Native and Non-Native Speakers**

	Speaker (NNS)	Recipient (NS)
Content	<i>Knowing</i>	<i>Unknowing</i>
Language	<i>Unknowing</i>	<i>Knowing</i>

The complementary nature of the distributed knowledge requires collaboration of the participants to achieve the successful outcome of the word search and to obtain intersubjectivity concerning language and content of both parties as a larger task of interaction.

Based on the distributed knowledge, participants in word searches perform structurally different kinds of actions. The NNS solicits help from the NS and accepts or rejects answers proposed by the NS, while the NS makes relevant guesses and provides candidate answers. Both the NS and the NNS are active participants in the word search activity as they closely monitor each other and contribute to the search with different, yet relevant actions. The following excerpt illustrates a case in point.

**EXCERPT 3**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Jane: So you have really poor people<br/>                 2 or really wealthy people?<br/>                 3 [not so much in the middle?<br/>                 4 Lee: [Ah:: I think <u>the- the-</u> (1.0)<br/>                 ((thinking face))<br/>                 5 how to say that- in English. the the</p> | <p>ORIGINAL TALK / INITIATION</p> <p>REQUEST FOR HELP<br/>                 + DISPLAY OF RESOURCE</p> |
|    |  |
| <p>6 Jane: <u>The gap?</u><br/>                 7 Lee: Yeah the <u>gap</u>.<br/>                 8 Jane: Yeah.<br/>                 9 (1.5)<br/>                 10 Lee: I think the <u>gap</u> in Seoul izuh:: (0.8)<br/>                 11 more severe than the: in other area. Right?</p>                         | <p>CANDIDATE ANSWER<br/>                 ACCEPTANCE</p> <p>RETURN TO THE ORIGINAL TALK</p>           |

In Excerpt 3, Jane and Lee are talking about major problems in Korea, Lee's native country. In line 4, Lee enters into a word search with cut-offs *the- the-*, accompanied by a thinking face and followed by a one-second pause (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986). As he fails to search for a word on his own, he directs a question to Jane in line 5. The question, *how to say that- in English*, reveals that the distributed knowledge is presupposed among the participants. Being a native speaker, Jane is treated as an expert of the language. As Lee asks the question to Jane, he brings his gaze to her and confirms that her gaze is fixed on him as well. Lee then begins to make gestures at the end of the question<sup>3</sup>. With the continuing gesture, he provides resources for Jane to come up with the sought-for word. Jane, as requested, gives a candidate answer, *the gap?* in line 6. The answer with rising intonation shows the participants' orientation to the fact that Lee is the one who has the expert knowledge of what he wants to say. Despite Jane's expertise in language, Lee has the ultimate authority to decide on the appropriateness of the word. In line 10, he accepts the answer with the acceptance token *yeah* and repeats the provided word (Hosoda, 2000). Jane confirms with Lee's repetition of the word and the search comes to a close. After the pause, Lee continues with his original account using the newly found phrase, *the gap*, in line 10. That is, the successful outcome of the word search results from the collaboration of both parties and is used as an essential resource for Lee to advance his action that was put on hold.

The above excerpts show a minimal deployment of the organization of word search activities. The NNS initiates the search and solicits assistance of the NS. The solicitation is accompanied by the resources that provide information regarding the sought-for word. In response, the NS proposes a candidate answer and, upon the recognition of the proposed word, the NNS accepts it as the right word. Since the search frequently becomes the main activity in progress in native and non-native interaction, it provides grounds for participants to co-construct the action. The search yields a successful outcome through step-wise practices of mutual monitoring. Also, word search activities assume the complementary distributed knowledge and structurally different roles of the interactants. A NNS typically engages in the search with respect to initiating, continuing, or closing down the search. Simultaneously, a NS contributes to the search by eliciting resources and making relevant guesses. Furthermore, not every attempt for word searches succeeds with a single try. It is very common for word search activities in native and non-native interaction to expand and become elaborate. In such cases, the central organization of a word search activity of asking for co-participation, providing resources, responding with relevant guesses, and making an assessment of the given answer is renewed and the sequence becomes expanded.

## Public Structure

A word search is a visible activity through which a speaker and an interlocutor publicly display their understanding of and alignment to each other. In the previous section, different stages of the overall organization of word search activities were examined. In this section, an elaboration of the co-participatory practices during the multiparty search stage when both participants are searching for a word together will be explored (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986). When NNSs ask for co-participation from NSs to join the search, they often provide resources that NSs can utilize. The resources are provided through both verbal and non-verbal actions; the former may include glosses, synonyms, collocations, and examples, and the latter may include gestures, mimes, and

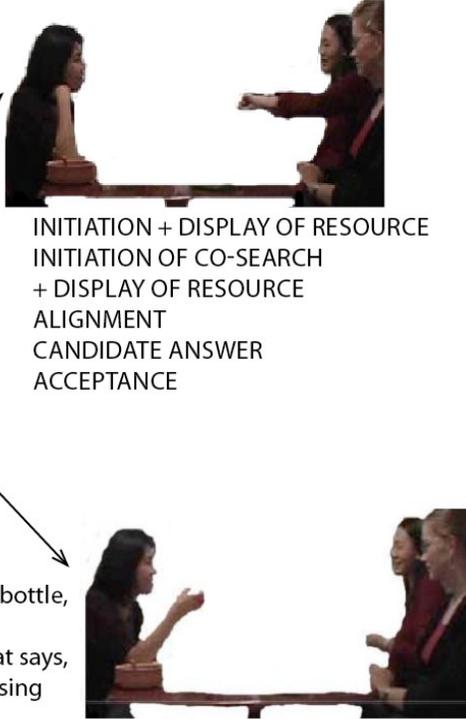
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<sup>3</sup> A detailed discussion of the use of gesture will be thoroughly examined in the next section.

use of physical objects (Kendon, 2004). Through their public display of recognition and alignment, NSs work with the given information or solicit further resources from NNSs to search for the word. As a result, the successful outcome of the search equips NNSs with an essential resource, the newly found word, to continue the action that was put on hold. That is, both parties design visible actions as interactional resources for their interlocutors' use, and play active roles to find the right word together.

In Excerpt 4, a group of friends at the dinner table are talking about how labels on certain products can be misleading for customers, when the customers come from a different cultural background.

#### EXCERPT 4

<p>1 Eun: What like- (1.0) they thought it was <u>baby</u>?                  2 Diane: They thought it was <u>baby</u> because                  3 whatever the <u>label</u> is what's inside.                  4 So like this has fruit on it                  5 cuz it's made of fruit, right?                  6 Becky: Ah::                  7 Eun: Gross.                  8 Diane: [&gt;It's really gross.&lt;                  9 Eun: [<u>That</u> reminds me of <u>tha:t- tha:t-</u>                  10 Becky: Oh <u>the- the- the- (.) the::</u>                  11 Eun: Yeah::                  12 Becky: <u>salad dressing.</u>                  13 Eun: Yeah::                  14 Diane: can you pass me this one?                  15 Becky: Mm-hmm,                  16 Eun: .hhh <u>not-</u> not real pea::ch                  17 [whatever? It was s(h)o funny?                  18 Becky: [Yeah th(h)ere's no peach inside.                  19 My roommate bought a salad dressing (.) bottle,                  20 and it had like a peach on the front?                  21 .hhh And then there's a h(h)uge lable that says,                  22 no <u>pea</u>(hh)ches a(h)re i(h)n the salad dressing                  23 it taste- it just <u>taste</u> good with peach.                  24 Eun: Y(hh)eah.                  25 ((Everybody laughs))</p>	<p>Becky Eun Diane</p>  <p>INITIATION + DISPLAY OF RESOURCE                  INITIATION OF CO-SEARCH                  + DISPLAY OF RESOURCE                  ALIGNMENT                  CANDIDATE ANSWER                  ACCEPTANCE</p>
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Responding to Diane's story, Eun enters into a word search with multiple cut-offs and sound stretches *tha:t- tha:t-*, in line 9. As she starts the search, Eun directs her gaze to Becky and displays various gestures. In fact, it turns out that Eun and Becky have a shared experience regarding the sought-for word, *salad dressing*. Triggered by the word search, Becky tells a story that they both know in lines 18-23.

As she begins the search, Eun displays hand movements with a pointing finger. She then makes the miming gesture of using a bottle and enacts a person pouring. That is, Eun's gesture changes from a deictic movement to an iconic representation of a specific action (McNeill, 1992). The enactment is done in a certain way for the recipient to use it as a resource to find the right word. As the participants are facing each other, Eun stretches her arm directly forward to the open

space between her and Becky. Simultaneously, her gaze is fixed exclusively at Becky. Eun's enactment shows that her invitation for participation does not occur in a vacuum. While asking for Becky's participation, Eun provides an interactional resource for her to join the search. Right after Becky looks at the enactment, she displays her recognition *Oh* and marks the beginning of the multiparty search. At this point, Becky recognizes the word that Eun is trying to produce, but is not able to provide the word immediately. Becky's own search prompted by Eun is displayed by multiple cut-offs, a micropause, and sound stretches *Oh the- the- the- (.) the::*, in line 10. Simultaneously, her stream of speech is accompanied by her hand gestures. Becky had been resting her chin on her right hand when the search began (line 9). However, as Becky recognizes the given resource, Eun's pouring gesture, she stretches her arm forward to the open space between the two and does the iconic gesture of a shape of a bottle. Her gesture is complete by the beginning of the fourth *the::* and displays the word that she is about to produce. Recognizing Becky's gesture, Eun aligns with her search, saying *Yeah::* in line 11. She displays her alignment after Becky produces the fourth *the::* and the gesture, but before she actually provides the sought-for phrase, *salad dressing*, in line 11. In line 12, Becky produces the word and as she succeeds in providing the word, her hand gesture changes from an iconic one, a bottle shape, to a display of affect, a clenched fist (McNeill, 1992). Considering its sequential position, the clenched fist can be understood as a celebratory gesture that accompanies the successful achievement of the search. That is, Becky marks the different stages of the search with minimal changes in her hand gestures. In response, Eun follows up with another *Yeah::*, in line 13, showing acceptance of the provided word. This sequence can be seen in the following illustration.

**FIGURE 2**  
**Excerpt 4 Gesture Sequence**



By looking at the talk itself as shown in Excerpt 4, it appears that the participants can read each other's mental states. They seem to recognize and align with each other with grammatically incomplete sentences and phrases, such as *That reminds me of tha:t- tha:t-* or *Oh the- the- the- (.) the::*. However, examining their interaction carefully, it is shown that the participants act upon what is publicly displayed through verbal and non-verbal actions. For example, Eun enacts pouring salad dressing and Becky portrays the shape of a salad dressing bottle through their hand gestures. Putting different types of gestures in the public space, the participants organize the activity as an interactive event rather than an individual search. Also, they carefully attend to the publicly provided resources to accordingly build their subsequent action.

In Excerpt 5, Jane and Lee are talking about Lee's friend who recently changed his major from accounting to psychotherapy. In the excerpt, the word search is revisited by the NS, and the NNS utilizes the local resource (writing on the notebook at hand) to make the sought-for word more accessible.

EXCERPT 5

<p>1 Lee: Uh: his major- at that time                  2 his major <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">wazuh:: (1.5) audit? like audit?</span>                  3 (0.5)                  4 Lee: .hhh I don't (0.2) know this                  ((writes on the paper))</p>	<p>INITIATION + GLOSS                  REQUEST FOR HELP                  + DISPLAY OF RESOURCE</p>
<p>5 Jane: Uh: auditing? Au[dit]ing?                  6 Lee: [Auditing. Audit.                  ((points to the writing))                  7 Jane: Uh:: like <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">financial auditing?</span>                  8 Lee: Yeah. Financial auditing.                  9 Jane: Ah:: okay.                  10 Lee: His major.                  11 Jane: (*really?)                  12 Lee: But hhhh but he also graduated                  13 [from his ma- from that university                  14 Jane: [Mm-hmm?                  15 Lee: [majoring- majoring this.                  ((points to the writing))                  16 Jane: [Ah-hah.                  17 Jane: <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Auditing?</span>                  18 So auditing is part of like <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">accounting?</span>                  19 Lee: Yeah <u>accounting</u>!                  20 [Yeah <u>accounting</u>. Yeah.                  21 Jane: [<u>Accounting</u>! Okay. Mm-hmm?                  22 Lee: <u>But</u> [he came to Indianapolis.                  23 Jane: [Mm-hmm?                  24 Jane: Ye::ah.</p>	<p>CANDIDATE ANSWER 1                  ACCEPTANCE</p> <p>REVISIT TO WORD SEARCH                  CANDIDATE ANSWER 2                  ACCEPTANCE / CELEBRATION</p>



In line 2, Lee brings his gaze toward Jane as he repeats the candidate answer, *audit? like audit?* However, Jane does not follow up with any recognition display. In response to the absence of recognition, Lee pushes the notebook in front of him to the center of the desk and moves inward to a position closer to the desk while writing the word in the notebook. As he moves the notebook to the center, the space easily accessible for Jane, Jane immediately moves to a more attentive posture towards the notebook and brings her gaze down to it. By adding another resource to the public space through writing, Lee reinforces his solicitation for Jane to recognize the word. She reads the written word out loud and provides a specification of the word as a candidate answer, *financial auditing*, in line 7. The writing is used as an important clue for Jane to recognize what Lee is trying to say. As a participant who wants to produce a word, Lee constructs his action to solicit co-participation from Jane. He recognizes Jane's knowledge of the word and makes relevant resources available for her to provide the sought-for word for him. At the same time, Jane builds her action as a guesser in the search. As she joins the search, she invites Lee to give more clues to make relevant guesses. Both participants design their action in a visible way so that their interlocutors can thus build the subsequent action.

In line 8, Lee's acceptance of the proposed answer followed by Jane's reconfirmation seems to end the search. Lee succeeds in producing the word through Jane, and Jane manages to

understand what Lee wants to say. However, in line 17, the word search is revisited by Jane's initiation. As Lee refers to his friend's major through pointing to the written word, Jane makes a finer distinction of the sought-for word. She clarifies her understanding and proposes another candidate answer, *accounting*, which turns out to be a more accurate word to describe one's major. Lee recognizes the word and accepts it as the appropriate word. This added sequence confirms Jane's active role as a co-participant. Both participants are engaged in obtaining a satisfactory outcome. Lee has the ultimate authority to accept or reject the proposed answer; at the same time, Jane can exercise her right to reopen the search and modify the answer. She attempts to make a refinement of the word at the relevant juncture of the sequence, when Lee refers to the sought-for word again. Thus, not only the speaker's but also the recipient's satisfaction with the word is taken into account to finalize the search.

As shown above, word search activities in native and non-native interaction may expand, and participants' efforts to engage one another can be renewed multiple times. It may require multiple tries for a NNS to solicit recognition from a NS as well as several attempts for a NS to provide an acceptable candidate answer. Excerpt 6 is accompanied with a series of pictures to show how each attempt to ask for co-participation in a word search activity is designed and displayed differently as a visible action. In this excerpt, Jane and Lee are talking about California, where both of them currently reside.

### EXCERPT 6

1 Lee: I heard that uh::  
2 California is very famous:: region.  
3 Jane: Ye:as.  
4 Lee: Like New York.  
5 Jane: Yeah very famous. Like New York.  
6 (0.5)

7 Jane: [For the-  
8 Lee: [It's not- it's not norma:l this- area  
9 (0.8)



Picture 1

10 Lee: I mean ((clears throat)) America has  
11 forty- forty sss- forty four or forty sssseven?



Picture 2

12 Jane: Mm-hmm?  
13 Lee: How to say.  
14 (0.8)



Picture 3

15 Lee: How to- what to say like about California? Say::  
16 (0.5)  
17 Jane: It's::  
18 (2.5)



Picture 4

- 19 Lee: •Ah:: what is- ? I mean (1.2) um::: tch!  
  
 Picture 5
- 20 Okay Indiana and California different name.  
 21 Jane: Yes.  
  
 Picture 6
- 22 Lee: Wh- how- what do- do we call.  
 23 (This-)   
  
 Picture 7 Picture 8
- 24 Jane: The states!  
 25 Lee: State! [Ah::: ((claps)) state ((claps)) state   
 Picture 9
- 26 Jane: [States! I'm sorry. Okay yes!  
 27 What they are.  
 28 The [states. The boundaries. The states. Ye:as.  
 29 Lee: [Yeah state.
- 30 Lee: So [California is very pe- famous state.  
 ((writes down the word))  
 31 Jane: [Yea::  
 32 Very famous state. [Ye::a  
 33 Lee: [Not normal state.  
 34 Jane: No::. California is the world's- (1.0)  
 35 California has the sixth- (0.8) sixth (0.5)  
 36 Lee: Yeah,  
 37 Jane: largest economy in the world.  
 38 Lee: ((surprised)) Sixth largest economy?  
 39 Jane: ((nods and smiles))

Without considering the verbal interaction in the excerpt above, the series of pictures itself reveals that the word search is built with distinctive visible actions. The participants' alignment in different stages of the activity is marked with changes in their gaze direction, gesture, and posture. In contrast to Pictures 2, 5, and 9, in which Lee is engaged in a solitary task, it is noticeable that Pictures 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8, in which Lee is gazing toward Jane, include his distinctive gestures. Combined with the talk, Lee's invitation for Jane's co-participation is constantly renewed with different interactional resources.

In line 8, the sound stretch in *norma::l* projects following trouble (Carroll, 2005; Schegloff et al., 1977) in Lee's speech. He shortly provides an alternative gloss *area* for the sought-for word *state* with hand gestures toward the open space (Picture 1). He looks directly at Jane and solicits her recognition of the word with no success. Jane's blank facial expression accompanied with her fixed gaze at Lee displays her lack of recognition. Lee faces difficulties in speaking, while Jane faces difficulties in understanding. As a result, each of them makes different actions not only to solve his or her own problems, but also to provide interactional resources to engage each other as

interlocutors. Lee withdraws his gaze and changes his posture to turn to the side (Picture 2). It is visible that he disengages himself from a multiparty search and enters into a solitary search at this moment. He then produces a sentence that includes a specific usage of the word, leaving the space for the word that he is looking for at the end. Although it turns out to be a failed attempt, the sentence is designed to be used as an interactional resource and to be co-constructed with the recipient. At the exact moment when Lee redirects his gaze toward Jane, he says *forty*, lifts his arm, and puts his four fingers in the open space between them (Picture 3). That is, he puts the substantive information about the sought-for word in the public space using various resources and re-engages himself in the multiparty search. However, his attempt fails to bring her recognition. Instead of recognizing the resource and providing a candidate answer, Jane produces a continuer soliciting Lee's further elaboration of the resource in line 12. As a result, Lee makes the ongoing search explicit with the question, *How to say*, and provides a mutually recognizable resource *California* (Picture 4). Even though Jane does not recognize the word yet, she does respond to the invitation for co-participation. In line 17, she registers the ongoing search and the question, saying *It's:*, as an attempt to answer it. Such attempt demonstrates that she is engaged in the search not only as a hearer but also as a co-searcher and prompts Lee to advance the search with further elaboration. Displaying her own search that is prompted by Lee's question, Jane further escalates the ongoing search.

Being invited to provide more resources for the search, Lee again looks away from Jane and displays his frustration through mumbling and self-admonishments, *Ah::, tch!*, in line 19 (Picture 5) (M. Goodwin, 1983). It is interesting that the abandoned question, *what is-*, in line 19 is neither produced nor recognized as a question to Jane from the beginning. First of all, it is said with a distinctively low volume. In addition, Picture 5, which captures the moment when he produces the utterance, shows his bodily disengagement from the co-search. His gaze is removed and his head is dropped to a different direction. Both his verbal and non-verbal actions mark the question as self-talk. In line 20, Lee comes back with a different way of constructing a clue for the search. With the new elaboration, he brings his gaze back and makes distinctive gestures from the prior attempts (Pictures 6 & 7). Lee repeatedly coordinates his participation status through displaying visible changes in his alignment to the search. After multiple invitations and use of different resources, Jane finally finds the word in line 24 and the elongated search comes to an extensive celebratory ending. Their show of excitement is displayed through high volume, hand clapping, and smiling faces (Picture 8). Lee also writes down the word in his notebook, marking the end of a search with a successful outcome (Picture 9). After the search closes down with such a marked ending, Lee uses the newly found word to re-engage in the ongoing talk. His turn in line 30 is a repetition of line 2 with the replacement of the word *region* with *state*.

Focusing on the public structure of word search activities, it is shown that both NSs and NNSs' activities are not based on different sets of rules and strategies. Instead, they act according to their interlocutor's visible actions. Furthermore, in a word search, every action of the participants is built in a certain way for it to be used as an interactional resource. In a larger sense, NNSs utilize NSs' knowledge of language to move forward with their action by requesting the help of NSs. However, to reach the successful outcome of the search, NNSs are required to provide relevant resources to engage NSs. Neither NNSs' asking for co-participation of NSs nor NSs' providing the right word for NNSs arises from the individuals' hidden mental states. Both the request for co-participation in the search and the request for relevant clues for the search are accompanied with various resources, often added and renewed. Based on the provided resources, the request can be fulfilled after a single or multiple attempts. To build the activity as an interactive

event, both parties shift the participation status with visible displays of recognition and alignment using verbal and non-verbal actions as well as local resources.

## IMPLICATIONS

The research questions for the current study concern the organization of word searches and the resources participants deploy to reach a satisfactory outcome of word searches. In an attempt to address such questions, participants' use of verbal and non-verbal resources during word search activities on a moment-by-moment basis has been analyzed. The organization of word searches is not predetermined as participants monitor and act upon each other's action, and such an action needs to be understood within its sequential position. The participants' action of requesting help, providing a candidate answer, or displaying acceptance, rejection, or modification of the answer is coordinated in such a way that takes account of their interlocutor's public behavior. In addition to providing verbal resources (e.g., a cut-off or a sound stretch), they resort to non-verbal resources (e.g., a gaze shift or an eyebrow flash) to mark the initiation of the search, the different stages in the search, and the end of the search.

As the study concerns different types of interactional settings and different NNSs with varying levels of target language (English) proficiency, the organization of a word search as a sequentially situated and publicly managed interaction is generic. Nonetheless, there exist some differences within such organization. The differences include the specific procedures NNSs deploy to elicit help from NSs and to provide uptake to the newly found word. First, the data suggest that the NNS tutee in the tutoring session requests the help of the NS tutor explicitly. He either asks a direct question, *how to say (in English)?*, or acknowledges his uncertainty in a straightforward way, *I don't know*. Even though explicit request for help does occur in the social setting, the NNSs as the participants in social gatherings are more likely to request help in a more subtle way, perhaps done with a gaze shift, which results in a collaborative sentence completion with the sought-for word (Sacks, 1992a, 1992b). Second, there seem to be differences in speaker's uptake as the search reaches its end. NNSs may produce the acceptance token *yeah*, and repeat the provided word (Hosoda, 2000). In some cases, however, they merely respond with *yeah*, or use the word immediately after accepting it as the right word to re-engage in the sequence that was put on hold. The data suggest that the more substantive the search is, the more marked the uptake is with the production of multiple repeats of the acceptance token and the word. Furthermore, as shown in Excerpts 5 and 6, after the NNS accepts the proposed word in a rather marked way, the NS also repeats the word herself. That is, in a tutoring setting in which there exists an institution-specific goal of language learning and practicing, the initiation as well the ending of word searches tend to be more salient.

## CONCLUSION

In this study, I have examined word search activities among NSs and NNSs of English in detail. Focusing on the internal organization of such activities, it has been shown that word searches do not necessarily occur within the minds of individuals; instead, they can be manifested through visible phenomena that advance the interactional work among interlocutors (contrary to the views of Fodor, Bever, & Garrett, 1974; Fromkin, 1977). Participants co-construct word search activities with structurally different, yet relevant actions based on the mutual monitoring of each other. In contrast to word searches in native speaker interaction, word searches in native and non-

native interaction may presuppose complementary distributed knowledge of content and language with regard to what NNSs attempt to produce. Whether minimally or extensively expanded, NNSs' soliciting help from NSs, NSs' proposing candidate answers to NNSs, and NNSs' accepting or rejecting the candidate answers are understood as a relevant next action within the sequential organization of word search activities. Moreover, as for the public structure of the activities, both parties display their recognition and alignment through verbal and non-verbal actions that are available to each other. Participants design their actions as an interactional resource for further work, not only to solve individual problems of speaking and understanding, but also to build intersubjectivity.

I have tried to show that word search activities among NSs and NNSs are social and interactive phenomena that cannot be fully understood through predetermined sets of rules and strategies. Instead, each step of the search is a sequentially positioned and publicly displayed action. As the participants search for a word together, the complementary distributed knowledge among them becomes available for each other as an interactional resource. It has been demonstrated in the examined data that NSs treat NNSs as interactants who have something to say which they are able to express through various resources, while NNSs invite NSs as co-searchers whose action goes beyond decoding and understanding the meaning of an utterance. Both participants actively engage in the search as co-searchers and contribute to find the satisfactory outcome of the search.

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## APPENDIX

### Transcription Conventions

Adapted from Jefferson, G. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In G. Lerner (Ed.), *Conversation analysis: Studies from the first generation* (pp. 13-31). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

[ or [ ]	overlapping or simultaneous utterances
=	latched utterances
(0.0)	length of silence in tenths of a second
(.)	micro-pause
:::	stretched sound
?/!/,	rising/animated/falling/continuing intonation
-	cut-off or self-interruption

- ◦           markedly quiet or soft talk
- underlining   relatively high pitch or volume
- CAPS           especially high volume
- hhh           audible aspiration caused by breathing, laughter, etc.
- .hhh           audible inhalation
- > <           increase in tempo
- < >           decrease in tempo
- >           rushed start
- ()           uncertainty on the transcriber's part
- (( ))           transcriber's description of event